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ABSTRACT

Suggestions for a new role for the Department of Education's regional offices should reflect the new goals and purposes of federal services to education as well as the needs of regional education clients. The U.S. Congress set 7 purposes when it created the Department of Education, and present Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell established 12 priorities regarding federal leadership in educational research, program development, evaluation, training, and technical assistance. Besides reflecting these purposes, the regional offices' role must support three Education Department policies: offering technical support to American education, ensuring equal educational opportunity, and promoting the improvement of educational quality. The regional offices' long-range goals involve educational equity. Their intermediate goals emphasize helping local education agencies manage change. The 15 immediate goals--oriented around federal, state, and local objectives--are based on the regional offices' characteristics and capabilities, including geographic proximity, insight into local educational needs, exemplification of federal concern, and provision of technical services. Among the immediate goals' concerns are new educational technology, improved management, financial incentives, needs assessment, and parent involvement. (Author/RW)

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THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW REGIONAL ROLE

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I. INTRODUCTION

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION REGIONAL OFFICES ARE IN A POSITION TO PLAY A SUPPORTIVE AND POSITIVE ROLE IN ADVANCING THE EDUCATIONAL-STATE-OF-THE-ART. THEIR GREATEST POTENTIAL STRENGTHS ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE ASSESSMENT OF WIDE SPREAD EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND ORCHESTRATING THE NUMEROUS FEDERALLY FUNDED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES TO RESPOND IN THEIR MOST EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT AND ECONOMICAL MANNER.

THE SYSTEMATIC IDENTIFICATION OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND THE QUEST FOR EXCELLENCE MUST NECESSARILY STIMULATE HIGH INVOLVEMENT OF ALL SEGMENTS OF COMMUNITY, STATE, AND NATIONAL LIFE. PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ALL AREAS MUST TAKE RESPONSIBILITY IN THEIR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE AMERICAN EDUCATION - A DETERMINATION THAT IS VITAL TO THEIR OWN FUTURE AND THAT OF GENERATIONS TO COME.

THESE ASPIRATIONS, NEEDS, AND CHANGING CONDITIONS CHALLENGE EDUCATIONAL LEADERS AND OTHER THOUGHTFUL CITIZENS TO LOOK CAREFULLY AT TODAY'S SCHOOLS - TO REINFORCE THAT WHICH IS GOOD, USEFUL AND PRODUCTIVE, TO RE-SHAPE OR DISCARD THOSE PRACTICES THAT ARE OUTMODED, TO DEVELOP NEW, CREATIVE APPROACHES TO EMERGING REQUIREMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP REQUIRES THE USE OF SOPHISTICATED PUPIL NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND MARKET RESEARCH TECHNIQUES AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, WITH THE MOST INTIMATE AND DETAILED OCCURRING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL. SUCH EFFORTS WILL INVOLVE THE PUPIL, PARENTS, COMMUNITY, INDUSTRY, THE TEACHERS, AND THE ADMINISTRATOR IN ESTABLISHING EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

A SYSTEM MUST BE PERFECTED AND EXPANDED WHICH WILL FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUND PRACTICES IN EDUCATION AND PROMOTE THE DIFFUSION OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND USEFUL PRODUCTS THROUGHOUT THE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY. UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED; THIS IMPLIES A CENTRAL SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON PILOT PROJECTS UNDERWAY AND SUCCESSES ATTAINED. THE BALANCE BETWEEN AVOIDING UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION AND THE STIFLING OF CREATIVE, NEW APPROACHES IS DELICATE BUT MUST BE FOUND. THE VALIDATION OF GOOD PRACTICES AND THE PROVISION OF RENEWAL CAPITAL FOR UPGRADING THROUGH TRAINING AND FOR THE INSTALLATION OF PROVEN EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES ARE ESSENTIAL. THERE IS EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THE POINT OF VIEW THAT AGENCIES TEND TO DEVELOP MORE ALTERNATIVES AND TO SELECT FROM THEM MORE CAREFULLY WHEN SELF-CONTROLLED CAPITAL IS USED.

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES INVOLVING RESEARCH, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, IN-DEPTH EVALUATION, TRAINING AND THE PROVISION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO STATE AND LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES ARE LEGITIMATE AND DESIRED FEDERAL FUNCTIONS.

THESE DESIRES ARE SPECIFICALLY EXPRESSED BY THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION.

THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS EXPRESSED ITS INTENT FOR FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION WHEN IT ESTABLISHED THE DEPARTMENT BY STATING SEVEN PURPOSES FOR ITS EXISTENCE. THESE PURPOSES, IN MY JUDGMENT, HOLD TRUE WHETHER THE "HOUSE OF EDUCATION" IS ORGANIZED INTO A FOUNDATION, INSTITUTION, OR DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

1. TO SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS.
2. TO STRENGTHEN THE FEDERAL COMMITMENT TO ENSURE ACCESS AND EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY.
3. TO SUPPLEMENT AND COMPLEMENT THE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION.

4. TO ENCOURAGE AND INCREASE THE VISIBILITY AND ATTENTION GIVEN TO EDUCATION NEEDS BY INCREASING INVOLVEMENT AND INCREASING PARTICIPATION OF ALL SEGMENTS OF OUR SOCIETY.

5. TO COORDINATE FEDERAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES VIA INTERAGENCY COOPERATION, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS.

6. TO IMPROVE SUPPORT OF BASIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR FINDINGS.

7. TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO ARTICULATED NEEDS OF STATE, LOCAL, TRIBAL, PUBLIC AND NON-PUBLIC AGENCIES.

REGIONAL OFFICES WILL HELP TO INSURE AND ENHANCE THOSE PURPOSES, FOR THEIR FUNCTIONS STRONGLY SUPPORT THE MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT AND UNIQUELY SERVE TO EXTEND THE BOUNDARIES OF EDUCATIONAL ACCESS AND OUTREACH TO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC.

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN INCLUDED SOME IMPORTANT MESSAGES IN HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS THAT WILL, INDEED, IMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL HAPPENINGS FOR THE FIRST HALF OF THIS DECADE. HE SAID:

> "IT IS MY INTENTION TO CURB THE SIZE AND INFLUENCE OF THE FEDERAL ESTABLISHMENT... IT IS NOT MY INTENTION OT DO AWAY WITH GOVERNMENT. IT IS RATHER TO MAKE IT WORK - WORK WITH US, NOT OVER US; TO STAND BY OUR SIDE, NOT RIDE ON OUR BACK."

DURING THE PRESIDENT'S FIRST YEAR IN OFFICE, MANY POLICIES HAVE CHANGED AND NEW PHILOSOPHIES INTRODUCED. SALIENT AMONG THEM IS THE BELIEF THAT MORE RELIANCE SHOULD BE PLACED AT THE STATE LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT.

THIS POSITION PAPER IS ALSO PRESENTED IN THE INTERESTS OF A MEANINGFUL REGIONAL PRESENCE FOR EDUCATION. IT SETS THE STAGE BY FIRST STIPULATING POLICY ASSUMPTIONS UNDERPINNING THE DEPARTMENT; SUGGESTS LONG RANGE, INTERMEDIATE AND IMMEDIATE GOALS BASED ON THOSE ASSUMPTIONS; AND, A POTENTIAL COURSE OF ACTION FOR REGIONAL OFFICES.

IN JUNE OF 1981, SECRETARY TERREL H. BELL ESTABLISHED "GOALS AND PRIORITIES OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION". THE TWELVE GOALS SET FORTH ARE:

I. OBTAIN TIGHTER CONTROL OVER THE PERFORMANCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL

II. REDUCE COSTS TO OPERATE THE DEPARTMENT

III. REDUCTION IN FRAUD, WASTE AND MARGINAL RESULTS

IV. REGULATION REFORM

V. REDUCTION OF THE PAPERWORK AND REPORTING BURDEN ON SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

VI. PROVIDE LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY FOR A NATION-WIDE CAMPAIGN ON EXCELLENCE AND IMPROVED QUALITY EDUCATION

A. ESTABLISH A NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE

B. REVIEW AND ENCOURAGE IMPLEMENTATION OF PRACTICES THAT MAKE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO EXCELLENCE

C. IDENTIFY AND HIGHLIGHT THOSE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES THAT ARE MAKING OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO EXCELLENCE

D. ENCOURAGE SCHOOL BOARDS TO ADOPT POLICIES THAT WILL EMBRACE A COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

VII. SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT PROGRAM CONSOLIDATION - THE BLOCK GRANTS

VIII. DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT AN APPROACH TO CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT THAT PERSUADES MORE STATE EDUCATION AGENCIES, LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES AND COLLEGE LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO ENFORCEMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS

IX. ATTAIN A NEW AND MORE EFFECTIVE FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

X. MOVE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INTO A NEW GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENTS

XI. IMPROVE COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS WITH THE WORLD OF ACADEME AND WITH THE U.S. CONGRESS

XII. SPREAD OF BEST PRACTICES IN EDUCATING THOSE THAT ARE HARD TO EDUCATE

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER IS TO PRESENT IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS ON THE TYPES OF DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BEST RESPOND TO OUR REGIONAL EDUCATION CLIENTS AND, AT THE SAME TIME, REFLECT A RESPONSIVE FEDERAL SERVICE TO EDUCATION. A SERVICE THAT IS SENSITIVE TO GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES WHILE ADDRESSING THE NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATION SPECIALISTS TO WORK TOGETHER FOR A COMMON GOOD: A BETTER EDUCATION FOR AMERICA'S CHILDREN.

BY ALL WORKING TOGETHER WE CAN RECAPTURE OUR PRIDE IN AMERICA'S SYSTEM OF EDUCATION. TRULY AN EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE.

TO PLACE THE ROLE OF THE REGIONAL OFFICES IN CONTEXT, SEVERAL ASSUMPTIONS UNDERGIRDING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MUST FIRST BE EXAMINED REGARDING ITS (A) SUPPORT TO (B) EQUITY OF AND (C) QUEST FOR EXCELLENCE IN AMERICAN EDUCATION. THEN LONG RANGE, INTERMEDIATE, AND IMMEDIATE GOALS CAN BE FORMULATED.

II. ASSUMPTIONS UNDERGIRDING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A. SUPPORT TO AMERICAN EDUCATION

THE FEDERAL AND AND STATE GOVERNMENTS UNDER THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION ARE SOVEREIGN POWERS. BOTH THE LAW AND TRADITION HOLD THAT PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE U.S. IS THE FUNCTION OVER WHICH HE STATES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE TO RETAIN CONTROL, AND THAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FREE, UNIVERSAL AND COMPULSORY PUBLIC EDUCATION ARE PROVIDED BY THE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.

HISTORICALLY, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS PROVIDED ASSISTANCE TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND TO ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO MEET CERTAIN NATIONAL PROBLEMS. DURING THE PAST GENERATION, MILLIONS OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTH HAVE BEEN HELPED, NEW AND INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN CREATED, AND MODELS FOR COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED. MANY BARRIERS AND CONSTRAINTS - HISTORICAL, LEGAL, POLITICAL, SOCIAL, EXPERIENTIAL, PERCEPTUAL AND CONCEPTUAL - ARE BEING LOWERED AND THE NEW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MUST BE PREPARED TO ENTER INTO AN ERA IN WHICH MANY ELUSIVE GOALS CAN NOW BE REALIZED. A BASE FOR THIS ERA HAS BEEN CREATED FROM WHICH IT IS POSSIBLE TO PREDICT THAT NEW AND MORE RELEVANT GOALS CAN BE IDENTIFIED AND ATTAINED. NO COMPARABLE OPPORTUNITY HAS BEEN AVAILABLE IN THE PAST.

BECAUSE IT IS VITAL TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY AND WELL-BEING THAT PRESENT-DAY EDUCATION BE STRENGTHENED, AND BECAUSE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ARE CONSTRICTING THE ABILITY OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF EXCELLENCE NOW REQUIRED, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MUST ADVOCATE AN INCREASING PROPORTION OF TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO PUBLIC EDUCATION. THIS CAN BE DONE WITHOUT DISTURBING THE JURISDICTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.

B. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MUST ACKNOWLEDGE AND RESPOND TO THE ACCELERATING DEMAND IN AMERICA FOR EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL SEGMENTS OF SOCIETY SO THAT INDIVIDUALS CAN CONTRIBUTE FULLY TO THE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND CULTURAL LIFE OF THE NATION. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN, THE PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY HANDICAPPED, THE ECONOMICALLY AND EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED, THOSE WHOSE LANGUAGE AND ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS IMPEDE THEIR LEARNING, REQUIRE

NEW THOUGHT AND DIRECTION. YET, IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF SPECIAL TARGET GROUPS THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL OTHERS IN THE POPULATION MUST NOT BE MINIMIZED; THE MULTI-TALENTED, THOSE WITH SPECIAL ABILITIES, AND THOSE IN "NORMAL" RANGE OF CAPABILITY MUST BE STIMULATED TO LEARN - TO MAKE MAXIMUM USE OF THEIR INNATE ABILITIES.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MUST PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND LEADERSHIP TO THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS IF TODAY'S EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM IS TO BE RELEVANT TO THE NEEDS OF TOMORROW'S ADULTS AND SOCIETY. TRADITIONAL EDUCATION MUST BE ALTERED TO RESPOND TO THE CHANGING CULTURE BEING AFFECTED BY THE ACCELERATING MOBILITY OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY WITHIN AND BETWEEN CONTINENTS, WITH THE CONSEQUENT INTEGRATION OF PEOPLE WITH DIFFERING LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE, EDUCATION, WEALTH, CULTURAL EXPOSURE, RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS. THE SCHOOL WILL BE REQUIRED TO BRING IN THE DIGNITY AND WORTH OF EACH INDIVIDUAL.

C. QUEST FOR EXCELLENCE

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MUST ACKNOWLEDGE THAT IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION MEANS, FIRST OF ALL, WORKING TO ATTAIN BASIC EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES EFFICIENTLY, EFFECTIVELY, AND WITH A HIGH DEGREE OF SATISFACTION ON THE PART OF THE LEARNER. REGIONAL OFFICES CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT SERVICES TO STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION SO THAT SCHOOL OFFICIALS AND TEACHERS CAN BE FREED TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT WILL ENABLE EACH CHILD TO DEVELOP HIS OR HER POTENTIAL TO THE FULLEST; TO EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF LEARNING; AND TO SEEK FURTHER KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-IMPROVEMENT.

BUT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MUST ASSERT THAT THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION GOES FAR BEYOND THIS LEVEL. QUALITY OF EDUCATION MEANS QUALITY OF LIFE. AN EDUCATION THAT CONCENTRATES MAINLY ON "COPING SKILLS" OR "BASICS", NO MATTER HOW WELL DONE, IS INADEQUATE. IT IS IMPORTANT, OF COURSE, THAT A SUCCESSFULLY-FUNCTIONING PERSON BE ABLE TO READ THE LABEL ON A CAN OF BEANS, OR THE DIRECTIONS ON A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION, OR THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUTTING TOGETHER A NEW TOY, OR TO FILL OUT A JOB APPLICATION CORRECTLY. IT IS EQUALLY WORTHWHILE THAT A PERSON READ WELL ENOUGH TO ANALYZE THE COLUMNS OF AN EDITORIAL PAGE, TO UNDERSTAND THEIR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE JUDICIAL PROCESS, TO SEE THROUGH THE MEANING AND INTENT OF AN ADVERTISEMENT, TO PARTICIPATE INTELLIGENTLY IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS, TO ENJOY A WELL-WRITTEN MAGAZINE ARTICLE, TO APPRECIATE A POEM, A LITERARY WORK, A DRAMA.

THE CONCEPT OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY CALLS FURTHER, FOR A RENEWED DEDICATION TO EXCELLENCE, TO A WEALTH OF OPPORTUNITY OPEN TO ALL, TO THE SEEKING TO BETTER AND BETTER EDUCATIONAL AND BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND THEIR EVALUATION DIFFUSION AMONG SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND INDIVIDUAL EDUCATORS. THIS EMPHASIS ON QUALITY COMES AT A TIME WHEN SCHOOLS ARE UNDER ATTACK FOR NOT MEASURING UP, AND WHEN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE SEVERE. THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MUST MAKE IT KNOWN TO ALL THAT THE CHALLENGE TO EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS IS THE MOST CRITICAL IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY.

III. GOALS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A. LONG RANGE GOALS

IT HAS BEEN CLEARLY ESTABLISHED THAT STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS MAY NOT ABROGATE THEIR LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE PUBLIC EDUCATION. THE COURTS HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED ALSO THAT SUCH EDUCATION MUST BE APPROPRIATE AND EQUITABLE FOR ALL CLASSES OF STUDENTS. IT FOLLOWS, THEREFORE, THAT GOVERNMENT AND THIS CABINET POSITION HAVE TWO BASIC GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES. THEY ARE:

1. TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE AND EQUAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH OF SCHOOL AGE, REGARDLESS OF THEIR RACE, COLOR, CREED, SEX, AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE, OR SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OR CLASSIFICATION.

2. TO EQUALIZE THE EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH SO ENGAGED, REGARDLESS OF THEIR DIFFERENCES IN RACE, COLOR, CREED, SEX, PLACE OF RESIDENCE, OR SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OR CLASSIFICATION.

WITH THESE BASIC GOALS IN PLACE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ACKNOWLEDGES THAT EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS SHOULD ACCRUE TO THE LEARNER REGARDLESS OF THE SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT ATTENDED AND ALSO THAT PUPIL PERFORMANCE SHOULD BE EQUAL. <u>EQUAL</u> PERFORMANCE IN THIS REGARD IS NOT THE SAME AS <u>UNIFORM</u> PERFORMANCE PER PUPIL; RATHER, IT MEANS THAT THE PERFORMANCE ON ACHIEVEMENT TESTS OR OTHER MEASURES BY MINORITY PUPILS BE INDISTINGUISHABLE OVERALL FROM THAT OF "MAJORITY" PUPILS OR URBAN PUPILS FROM SURBURBAN PUPILS.

B. INTERMEDIATE GOALS

IF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM IS TO RESOLVE THE EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS THAT CONFRONT IT, SEVERAL CHANGES NEED TO ME MADE. AS A START, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION MUST HELP LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES IMPROVE THEIR OWN CAPACITY TO CHANGE, AND TO REVIEW THE EDUCATIONAL

SYSTEM. LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT THEY CAN EXPAND AND AND ELABORATE UPON EXISTING PROGRAMS IN RESPONSE TO NATIONAL CONCERNS; THEY NEED NOW TO BE SUPPORTED IN ENDEAVORS TO DESIGN, DEVELOP INSTALL MARKEDLY DIFFERENT PROGRAMS. MOREOVER, THEY NEED TO DEVELOP THE CAPACITY - NOW LARGELY UNDERDEVELOPED - TO MANAGE THE PROBLEMS OF CONTINUOUS CHANGE. THIS IS REMARKABLY DIFFERENT THAN SIMPLY RESPONDING TO DEMANDS OF FEDERAL AND STATE CATEGORICAL ASSISTANCE.

INTERMEDIATE GOALS FOR ACTION IN THE DEPARTMENT WOULD THEN IMPLY THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW KIND OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT THAT COULD TRULY BE RESPONSIVE TO THE 12 DEPARTMENTAL GOALS ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION (AS STATED IN THE INTRODUCTORY SECTION OF THIS PAPER).

BOLD OBJECTIVES NEED TO BE CULTIVATED IF SECRETARY BELL'S INTENT IS TO BE REALIZED. THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW KIND OF MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT REACHING FROM WASHINGTON TO THE REGIONS MUST BE CREATED FOR THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES TO BE ATTAINED.

A. INVOLVE THE CLIENTELE IN THE DEFINITION OF NEEDS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR RESOLUTIONS.

B. BRING UNIQUE NEEDS OF THE REGION TO THE ATTENTION OF PROGRAM MANAGERS SO POLICY WILL BE RESPONSIVE.

C. PROMOTE THE IMPROVEMENTS OF PRACTICE BY IDENTIFYING AND ESTABLISHING A TALENTED POOL OF MANAGEMENT, CURRICULA AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERTS EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO OTHER PRACTITIONERS.

D. SUPPORT STATE AND LOCAL EFFORTS TO UNDERSTAND AND BETTER UTILIZE FEDERAL EDUCATIONAL AND RELATED REGULATIONS TO MEET THEIR NEEDS IN UNIQUE AND DIVERSE SETTINGS.

E. ASSIST IN THE CREATION OF A NEW COALITION AMONG COMMUNITY GROUPS THROUGH WHICH TO FASHION A POLITICALLY VIABLE EDUCATION POLICY, AND THE PERSONALIZATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY.

F. BRING THE MANAGEMENT AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY TO BEAR UPON EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS.

G. PLACE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY ON REGIONAL OFFICES TO SEARCH FOR FEDERAL PROGRAM "FIELD READERS" WHO ARE SENSITIVE TO REGIONAL NEEDS AND CONDITIONS.

H. DESIGN STRATEGIES FOR ENCOURAGING AND PROMOTING THE SKILLS OF VOLUNTEERS INTO THE "COMPREHENSIVE" PURPOSES OF SCHOOLING.

I. ORGANIZE REGIONAL DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES THAT ORCHESTRATE ALL FEDERALLY FUNDED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND DISSEMINATION AWARDS FOR MAXIMUM AWARENESS AND COORDINATION THAT DEMONSTRATE REGIONAL EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND ECONOMY.

J. ESTABLISH A NATION-WIDE "EDUCATIONAL DISSEMINATION COUNCIL" WITH BOTH NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COMPONENTS TO DIFFUSE INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE OF BEST PRACTICES IN A MANNER THAT DRASTICALLY REDUCES THE LAG TIME BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE.

C. IMMEDIATE GOALS

THE REGIONAL TEAMS ARE IN PLACE, EXPERIENCED, AND GEARED UP TO PROVIDE HIGH-LEVEL SERVICE TO HELP ACHIEVE THE INTERMEDIATE GOALS I HAVE OUTLINED ABOVE, AS WELL AS CONTRIBUTING TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT'S LONG-RANGE OBJECTIVES. THE REGIONAL OFFICES ALSO HAVE LONG AND VARIED GRASS-ROOTS INVOLVEMENT WITH THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY, AND HAVE UNIQUE CAPABILITY TO FOCUS ON PROXIMATE, OR IMMEDIATE GOALS AS WELL. THE REGIONAL OFFICES CAN CONVEY AN EXPRESSION OF CONCERN AND SUPPORT IN HELPING TO CARRY OUT THE OVERALL MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. THIS SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED A REARRANGEMENT OF PAST, RATHER, A WHOLE NEW ENTERPRISE THAT RAISES THE AWARENESS AND PRESENCE OF FEDERAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP IN A POSITIVE AND WHOLESOME WAY. ACCORDINGLY, A SET OF UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS IS PRESENTED ALONG WITH A STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES, SELECTED TO ILLUSTRATE HOW THE REGIONAL PRESENCE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE FULL RANGE OF THE DEPARTMENTAL GOALS.

1. UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS AND CAPACITIES OF REGIONAL OFFICES

A. GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY TO THE DEPARTMENT'S CLIENTELE

IN A TIME OF RISING TRANSPORTATION COSTS, THE ABSOLUTE NATIONAL NEED TO CONSERVE ENERGY AND TO HELP CURB GOVERNMENTAL EXENDITURES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO INFLATION, THE REGIONAL OFFICES CAN SERVE IN TANDEM WITH THE CENTRAL OFFICE MISSION WITH GREATER EFFICIENCY.

B. SERVE AS THE SECRETARY'S EYES AND EARS REGARDING THE CONDITION OF EDUCATION FROM THE FEDERAL VIEWPOINT

THE REGIONAL OFFICES CAN FACILITATE THE BRINGING TOGETHER OF PEOPLE WITHIN THE REGION WITH LIKE RESPONSIBILITIES AND MUTUAL INTERESTS TO DISCUSS ISSUES AND CONCERNS AND GATHER A CROSS FERTILIZATION OF IDEAS, SOLUTIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GENUINE RESEARCH. THE REGIONAL OFFICES CAN ALSO, BECAUSE OF THEIR AVAILABILITY, QUICKLY RESPOND TO THE SECRETARY'S INTEREST OR INQUIRY WITHIN THE REGION. BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, REGIONAL OFFICES CAN PROVIDE THE CENTRAL OFFICE WITH INSIGHTS INTO THE SPECIALIZED DEMOGRAPHIC POPULATION NEEDS WITHIN THE REGIONS, AND THE GENERAL CONDITION OF EDUCATION WITHIN WHICH FEDERALLY SPONSORED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ARE STRIVING TO BE SUCCESSFUL.

C. EXEMPLIFY FEDERAL CONCERN, INTEREST AND LEADERSHIP

WITH A FEDERAL PRESENCE WITHIN THE REGION THAT IS AWARE OF LOCAL, STATE AND REGIONAL NEEDS, SUCH PERSONNEL CAN BE INFORMED OF SUCCESSFUL EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES; ENCOURAGED TO COORDINATE RESOURCES AND SERVICES FROM A VARIETY OF FEDERAL AGENCIES IN BEHALF OF PARTICULAR TARGET POPULATIONS; AND, BE HELPED TO IDENTIFY AND ASSEMBLE THE BEST AVAILABLE EXPERTISE TO ADDRESS SPECIAL PURPOSE NEEDS.

D. ENCOURAGE AND PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF FEDERALLY FUNDED EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS

TRAINED REGIONAL OFFICE PERSONNEL COULD SYSTEMATICALLY BE DISPATCHED TO HELP UPGRADE THE QUALITY OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGERIAL KNOW-HOW IN BEHALF OF FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS. UNDER THE PHLOSOPHY OF "HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES" -- SUCH SERVICES SHOULD BE VIEWED AS CRITICAL AND ESSENTIAL IN TIMES THAT DEMAND GREATER ACCOUNTABLILITY AND EFFICIENCY OF FEDERAL EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURES. REGIONAL OFFICES COULD OFFER TRAINED SPECIALISTS IN AREAS OF PRE-APPLICATION ASSISTANCE; TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE ONGOING FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS; AND, POST AWARD FOLLOW-UP AND CLOSE OUT SERVICES.

THESE SERVICES COULD ALL BE OFFERED REGIONALLY, IN A MANNER THAT ENHANCES THE OVERALL DEPARTMENT MISSION IN EACH GEOGRAPHIC LOCALE. WITH THAT INTENT IN MIND THE FOLLOWING SELECTED REGIONAL OFFICE OBJECTIVES AFFECTING FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS ARE PRESENTED.

2. SUGGESTED REGIONAL OFFICE ACTIVITIES

A. FEDERALLY ORIENTED OBJECTIVES

1. TO PROVIDE GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO RECOGNIZED OR EMERGING NATIONAL NEEDS AS DETECTED.

2. TO PROVIDE GREATER SYSTEMATIC SUPPORT TO FEDERALLY SPONSORED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS BY INTRODUCING BETTER FEDERAL PRE-APPLICATION ASSISTANCE, COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING IN PROGRAM DESIGN, IMPROVE MONITORING, MORE RELEVANT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, GREATER ATTENTION TO QUALITY CONTROL AND EXPLICIT MEASURES OF EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS.

3. TO INVESTIGATE NEW APPLICATIONS OF REGION-WIDE TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES THAT COULD DRAMATICALLY ENHANCE LEARNING, REDUCE TRAVEL COSTS AND COMPENSATE FOR AREA WIDE TEACHER SHORTAGES (i.e. MATH, SCIENCE AND PHYSICS)

4. TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE FINANCIAL INCENTIVES (FEDERAL SEED MONEY) SO THAT STATES AND SELECTED SCHOOL DISTRICTS WILL SEEK IMPROVEMENTS CONSISTENT WITH LOCAL NEEDS IN AREAS OF NATIONAL CONCERN (i.e., ENERGY, BASIC SKILLS, TECHNOLOGY, NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT), AND ALSO SPONSORE WORKSHOPS AND EXECTUVIE ACADEMIES FOR SPECIAL FEDERAL PURPOSES (i.e., TO IMPROVE LOCAL PROJECT DIRECTORS' ABILITY TO PLAN, IMPLEMENT, EVALUATE AND REDESIGN FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS).

5. TO PERFECT A SYSTEM WHICH WILL FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUND EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS PRACTICES IN EDUCATION AND PROMOTE THE DIFFUSION OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND USEFUL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PRODUCTS THROUGHOUT THE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY IN A SYSTEMATIC MANNER. (RESULTS MUST REACH THE PEOPLE WHO ORIGINALLY ASKED THE QUESTIONS AND POINTED UP THE PROBLEMS - THE CLASSROOM TEACHER AND BUILDING PRINCIPAL.

6. TO WORK AS 10 "INTERCONNECTED REGIONAL EXTENSIONS" OF HEADQUARTERS EACH HAVING ITS OWN REGIONAL SATELLITE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM AND A CORRESPONDING NUCLEUS OF PROGRAMMATIC AND POLICY INFORMATION SERVICE PROVIDES COORDINATING THE OVERALL FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION.

B. STATE ORIENTED OBJECTIVES

1. TO STIMULATE THE COORDINATION OF STATE INITIATIVES INTO A COMPLEMENTARY PROCESS.

2. TO STIMULATE PLANNING EXPERIMENTATION EFFORTS.

3. TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REQUIRED TO INITIATE AND IMPLEMENT INNOVATION AND COORDINATION OF EXPERIMENTATION.

4. TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP IN ASSESSING NEEDS AND DRAWING FROM MODEL PROGRAMS DEVELOPED ELSEWHERE.

5. TO ASSIST IN THE IDENTIFICATION AND RECOGNITION OF SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS THAT HELP PROMOTE AND SHARE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE.

C. LOCALLY ORIENTED OBJECTIVES

1. TO EFFECT THE COORDINATION OF EXPERIMENTATION AND DEMONSTRATION SO THAT INDIVIDUAL ATTEMPTS ARE NOT FRAGMENTED OR DUPLICATIVE.

2. TO FOSTER IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND WITHIN SCHOOLS THE CAPACITY TO EVALUATE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS, TO DRAW UPON MODELS IN OTHER SITES, AND TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING THEIR INDIVIDUAL SITUATION.

3. TO SUPPORT ON-GOING INVOLVEMENT IN, AND CAPACITY FOR, EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT AND CHANGE.

4. TO SEEK EFFECTIVE MEANS FOR ACTIVELY ENGAGING THE PARENTS TO UNDERSTAND THE LEARNING PROCESS OF CHILDREN AS NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND MICROCUMPUTERS BECOME COMMONPLACE TOOLS IN THE HOME.

TO CONCLUDE, ITS PARAMOUNT TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND REMEMBER OUR RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATION EFFORTS MUST BE KEYED TO THE LEARNER AND THOSE CHARGED WITH THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF PROVIDING QUALITY EDUCATION. RESEARCH NOR DISSEMINATION ARE ENDS UNTO THEMSELVES! THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR SERVICES MAY GENERATE PROFESSIONAL DIFFERENCES BUT NEVER PROFESSIONAL JEALOUSIES THAT INHIBIT US FROM SHARING AND WORKING TOGETHER IN BEHALF OF OUR CHILDREN.